

Non-academic staff to form union

by Rory Clarke

A group of office and technical staff have decided to unionize, claiming that McGill University Non-Academic Staff Association (MUNASA) is ineffective in representing their interests.

An organizing committee for the National Union of McGill Office and Technical Employees (NUMOTE) has been established. Jean Deppisch, one of the union organizers and a worker in the Faculty of Management, stressed the fact that "the administration has the legal right to decree every

aspect of their working conditions. The organization for non-academic staff has no bargaining power, and there is no input from employees."

MUNASA is what is known as a "company union" which has been set up and manipulated by management to try to discourage the possibility of unionization. Deppisch said that by allowing its members to think their interests are being looked after, MUNASA keeps them inactive and incapable of improving their working conditions.

According to a press release, the 2,000 office and technical

workers are, at present, at a great disadvantage in dealing with the administration individually. A negotiated contract, the first aim of the union, would take up such questions as salary structures, job security, job classification, promotions, merit increases over and above cost of living increases, fringe benefits and working conditions.

Deppisch said that there was a great deal of support among non-academic workers for a union and was very optimistic about its chances for success.

NUMOTE meetings will be announced in the near future.



John Elstad

Stan Brakhage, a most unusual film maker, unveiled and talked about some of his latest films at McGill last night.

Lesbian conference: time of solidarity

by Ann Kenney

Lesbian mothers, money problems, politics, alcoholism, bisexuality and communal living were topics discussed at the Second Annual National Montreal Lesbian Conference held here this weekend.

Many women felt the most important aspect of the conference was the sense of solidarity and festivity which resulted from women of varied backgrounds being able to help one another and share experiences. A spokeswoman for the group said the main purpose of the conference was not to take specific action, "but to provide a forum for an exchange of

ideas, and to celebrate." She said "the women really had a good time."

Several workshops dealt with the nature of role playing in relationships. It was agreed that although stereotype lesbian roles are not strictly adhered to any more, they are by no means absent in many relationships. Also discussed was the lesbian's position in society and the oppression she faces. The difficulties in finding housing and jobs as well as the more subtle forms of discrimination against gay women were mentioned.

Women living in lesbian communes shared their experiences and problems in raising

children, sharing responsibilities and finances, and in personal relationships. A group of women who run a farm in Nova Scotia described their attempts to achieve a self-sufficient lifestyle.

The conference, which was organized by Montreal Gay Women-Labyrinths Montreal in co-operation with the Montreal Women's Information and Referral Centre, consisted of over twenty workshops, folk singing and a dance. It was attended by 400 women from all parts of Canada and the United States. Some came from as far as Vancouver and the Maritimes.

Another conference is being planned for next September.

A return to the psychedelic 60's

by Donna Balkan

"Experimental" film is like spinach: if you don't like it you feel a bit guilty because you know it's supposed to be good for you. That's the feeling I got from watching Stan Brakhage's recent opus, "The Text of Light."

This was originally supposed to be a review of the film, but how much can you say about an extended light show, particularly if you don't know a macro lens from a telephoto? I could have started by saying it was "interesting": the standard cop-out answer when you're afraid to admit you aren't too impressed with something that is supposed to be "avant-garde."

On the other hand, I could

have condemned it outright, but my ignorance of the subtle technicalities of film-making would make such an approach rather presumptuous on my part. Therefore, I'll only say that while I did enjoy watching the patterns of multicoloured light flash across the screen for the first five minutes of the film, an hour of it became a little bit tedious. And, true to form, I stifled my yawns so that the film buff in back of me wouldn't notice my lack of appreciation for "art."

Which leads me to the more intriguing aspect of the evening: the audience. There are three basic audience reactions to a film such as Brakhage's: the aforementioned yawn-stifling,

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Colombians to face deportation

by Pat Bolland

Supporters of 37 Colombian workers who were laid off recently by Associated Textiles of Canada (ATC) and ordered deported by the Department of Immigration demonstrated outside the head office of ATC at the Sun Life Building last Friday.

The Colombian workers, all skilled weavers, came to Canada a little over a year ago on an invitation from the Immigration Department to work for ATC at their plant in Louisville (near Trois Rivières.)

Leaving behind secure jobs and seniority status in Colombia, the workers arrived with their families believing they were being offered job security and a "new life" here. Besides the \$2.98 hourly wage they were promised, the workers were told they would receive landed immigrant status once they settled in Louisville.

This year, however, ATC's profits are down, and on January 10, the company laid off 100 workers, including all 37 Colombians. The day before, the Colombian workers had

been informed that their temporary work visas had been changed to tourist visas, and that they had to be out of the country by January 31.

At a union meeting on January 15, 400 Associated Textile workers voted to hold a sympathy strike to demand that the Colombians be given Landed Immigrant Visas.

"The situation of the Colombian workers provides further evidence for the systematic manner in which employers and

continued on page 3

Science and society Feb. 3 to 7

The Daily invites all scientists, students of science, and others interested to contribute articles relevant to the science and society theme, including analyses of McGill's own research programs. Our criterion for acceptance is that the article be informative or stimulate debate. The more viewpoints offered, the better, so submit your ideas... by Friday at the latest, please.

Racism Feb. 10 to 14

All persons interested in the causes and manifestations of racism are invited to contribute articles for this theme.

All articles, letters, or other material intended for publication should be typed, triple-spaced on one side of the paper only. The author's name and telephone number should be included. The Daily office can be found in the basement of the Union building, 3480 McTavish Street and the phone number is 392-8955-6-7-8. Call Sunday to Thursday nights from 6 pm until about 2 am.

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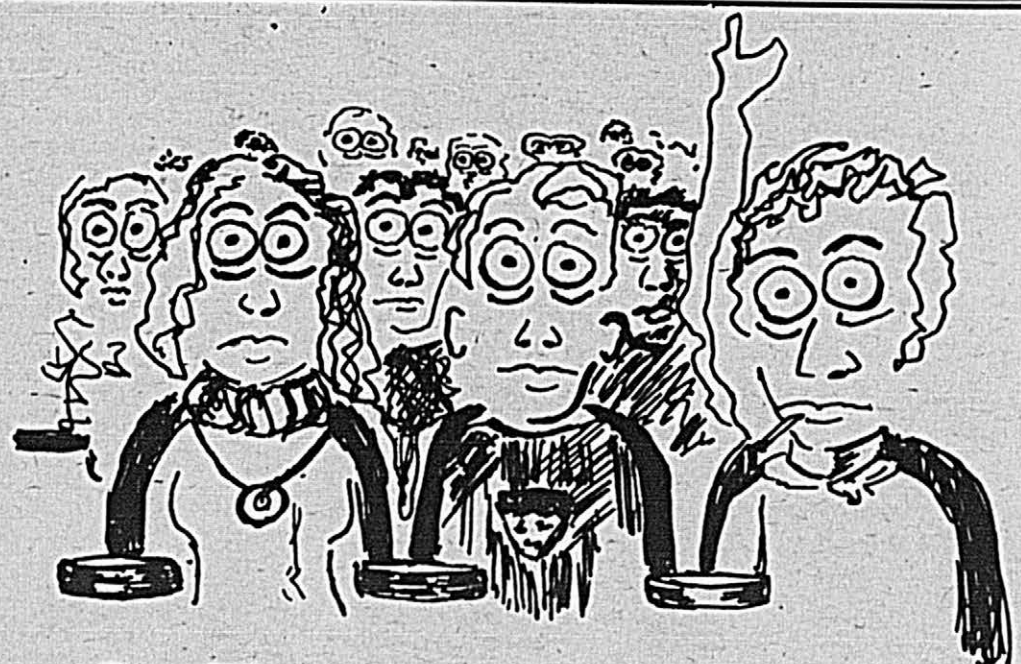


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Colombians...

continued from page 1

immigration officials—the latter working for the former's interests—have nothing but contempt for immigrant workers," said a spokesman for the demonstrators.

The spokesman said that the Colombians' struggle against the Immigration Department is not an isolated one. "The refusal to grant refugee status to Haitians, the slamming of the Embassy doors in Chile, and this struggle all demonstrate that political decisions in Ottawa are determined by economic interests of capitalist enterprises," he said.

According to the spokesman, the workers have three choices: to go back to Colombia and apply anew for work permits to return to Canada ("they would likely be refused"); to return to Colombia and try to get back their jobs in the weaving industry there ("this would be extremely difficult"); or they could go underground in Canada.

Today

McGill Outing Club:

Open meeting tonight at 7:30 pm in the Engineering Common Room. Short film "The Voyageurs Slides on Woodmen's Competition."

English Department:

Allan Thomas will give an illustrated lecture on "Social documentary on Victorian photographs," today, at 4 pm in Arts 230.

Japanese Students' Society:

Important meeting today, at 6 pm in the I.S.A. office.

Fraternities are...!!!:

But before you fill in the missing word, you should know what you're talking about. Come and see Sigma Chi today, have a hot lunch with us, and we'll help you fill in the blank! 1 pm at 3581 University.

Workers' Support Committee:

Regular meeting tonight at 6 pm in room 123 of the Union.

Anthropology Students' Association Film Series:

A 35 minute film on "A Trade Union of the Third World" traces the history of Colonialism from the American War of Independence to America's own military intervention in the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Vietnam. It deals with a possible Third World unity in a trade bloc. At 1 pm in Leacock 111.

McGill Winter Carnival:

Volunteers needed from now through Carnival week (February 17-23) to help run events, pour beer, sell tickets and work on publicity. If interested sign up in room B24 of the Union.

What's What

STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

Sexual politics...human liberation, 8-week discussion group on theology, liberation, sex, marriage. Interested? Come to information meeting, Yellow Door, 3625 Avenue, 1 pm on either Wednesday January 29 or Thursday January 30. Cheap lunch available.

AMERICAN EXPATRIOTS

Exiles, interested Canadians and friends: come write your reasons for refusing Ford's regained entry programme to your local paper, senators and representative at a "letter writing party," Wednesday, January 29 from 8-12 pm, 2332 Edward Montpelier, 2nd story (cafeteria) Centre Communautaire.

MCGILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

History students election, Wednesday January 29, 9 am to 5 pm in Leacock building lobby.

PRE-MED SOCIETY

Executive meeting, Wednesday January 29, 1 pm in Union 413. If you can't come, leave message in the mailbox.

WAA INTRAMURAL ICE HOCKEY

Schedule Wednesday January 29, 5:15 Ed vs. Arts & Sc. 6:00 Med vs. P & OT. 6:45 Res & Frats vs. Arts & Sc. 7:30 Ed vs. Med. 8:15 Res & Frats vs. Management. 9:00 Management vs. Arts & Sc. 9:45 Res & Frats vs. P & OT.

ANTHROPOLOGY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION Liebalala 1935—landmark in ethnographic film-making. Thursday January 30, 1 pm in L111.

EAST ASIAN STUDIES

Prof. Paul Lin speaks on values in Chinese development. Thursday January 30, 3:30 pm in Dept. of Fine Arts lecture room, West wing, top floor, Arts building.

HELLENIC STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Announces a meeting Wednesday January 29, 6 pm in Union 123.

Brakhage...

continued from page 1

sincere interest coupled with occasional confusion, and transfixed adulation. All three were very much in evidence as I surveyed the faces of the hundred-or-more film-goers. While the film could have been the product of the psychedelic sixties, the audience was not.

Despite their adulation, the devotees didn't utter a single "Oh wow;" and the questions they asked Brakhage following the presentation reflected a certain amount of genuine knowledge and interest. Moreover, there wasn't a trace of the familiar dope-smell, which would have been omnipresent at a similar event five years ago. The men were a little less hairy, I noticed fewer pairs of blue jeans, and some of the women actually wore skirts. How times have changed!

I must also mention that the audience provided the soundtrack, which consisted of clothes-rustling, match-lighting and the occasional cough. Anyone familiar with John Cage's orchestral masterpiece, "Silence," should know that it would have provided suitable accompaniment for the Brakhage film.

I was a great deal more impressed with Brakhage himself than I was with his film. He really seems to believe in what he's doing, and is more articulate and knowledgeable about his craft. His entertaining commentary both before and after the film was filled with relevant insights into the nature of art, science, the society and occasionally, politics.

Brakhage is extremely critical of our science-oriented society, claiming that "we live in a time where people will believe any machine before a human being," and making constant references to "the religion of science." His view of American society is equally perceptive: "People have trouble with happiness in the U.S. because they've been guaranteed the pursuit of it," was one of his more revealing comments.

Not that the film had no effect on me at all. Brakhage made it by photographing an ash tray from different angles, and I'll never look at another ash tray without taking a second glance.

From our readers

Remember the fuss about free love? The fuss arose not only because kids were rejecting traditional ways of viewing their and other people's bodies, but also because they weren't ashamed to say they dug sex. This was the last straw for puritan society. In straight terms and philosophy, sex is for procreation, which is for survival, which is necessary. Something necessary just isn't conceived as being pleasant and rewarding in and of itself. So, when a bunch of juvenile freaks, born only yesterday, began screaming over rooftops what adult morality had been ashamed to whisper, that is, that sex is fun, it seemed too much for anyone to take. Wishing to avoid more confrontation on the matter, traditional culture decided to adapt some of the counterculture's sexual mores and values, if any.

They got it all wrong, though. Free love became anonymous wife-swapping, a relatively frequent activity in sanitary middle-class society (over one million swappers in the U.S. according to a 1974 Playboy survey). Being freer with one's body somehow got translated as using your body or someone else's as a sex object. This has led to a proliferation of girlie and pornographic magazines (as well as a multitude of body, hair, and armpit lotions, tonics, creams, sprays, etc), each one trying to disguise a basically fake approach to sexuality as "liberating," "modern," "natural," "the real thing," while erecting new barriers between the sexes.

Capitalist society has indeed profited from the counterculture of the sixties. Why let a good thing be used and then thrown away for good? Pick it up before it pollutes the environment, scrub it, paint and polish it, give it a new name, and sell it with a profit. Recycling and ecology at work.

So what happens to us who only saw Woodstock comfortably seated in a Famous Players theatre; hitch-hiked to California to discover that the hippies were gone, or to Yorkville to find it full of highrises and chic art galleries? What happens to us who only vicariously experienc-

Were the hippies right?

Part II

ed the counterculture of the sixties, either because we were too young, too conditioned, or simply unaware? Where do we turn for our liberation?

Our counterculture today seems to be characterized by a transformation of menopausal adult politics for young radicals who take themselves seriously (which, if you'll remember, the Rubins and the Hoffmans didn't do—for a while) to play with. What about social awareness, you may ask. Well, social awareness today means classifying everyone and everything into ready-made slots and isms for convenient, worry-free analysis. This is understandable, if one considers the fact that we are constantly faced with decisions, the fact that we are constantly reminded that whatever we do must be done rapidly. Therefore, we tend to ignore or discard those aspects of a person's behaviour which can't be immediately perceived or understood, and attach importance only to the usual, culturally approved behaviours, like speech, behaviours which by their very definitions, imply monotony and repetition. Ever wonder why radical political groups hide themselves behind meaningless slogans?

Thus, the same intolerance, close-mindedness and general stupidity which created the

counterculture of the sixties by opposing the latter and thus giving it opportunities to stand out, is now characterizing the counterculture of the seventies. When one takes the trouble to see through them, the Mouvement Revolutionnaire des Etudiants du Quebec, for example, and the Liberal Party are, in fact two sides of the same object. All that differs is that one group has younger members and a different ideology than the other. But if their means are the same, that is, if the tools used to reach goals are identical (in their case, the tool is political action) then it matters not in the least what the ideology is. Liberation means seeing through all the social games, including your very own, not just the ones that happened to be on the other side of the fence.

In 1975, as we get closer and closer to fulfilling gloomy predictions of worldwide disasters caused by overpopulation, food and fuel shortages, nuclear war, it seems that the hippies were right after all. Get back to nature, they preached. Throw away your weapons, they screamed. We're all heading for the brink, they warned. However, like the people and institutions they were condemning and turning away from, the members of the counterculture of the sixties made the terrible and unforgivable mistake of taking themselves too seriously, thus falling into the trap of believing that their game was better than other games, when in fact, it was simply another game. In this manner, what started out as a way of liberation turned into another social institution and died of respectability and commercialism.

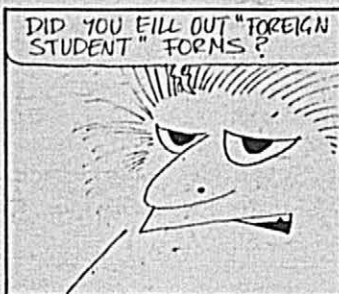
To paraphrase John Lennon, "The dream is over." The counterculture of the sixties—admittedly sprinkled with an inborn "middle-class-affluence" naivety, but nevertheless sincere—has been absorbed, digested, excreted in various gross forms by a power-hungry, oppressive, and intolerant society. The flower children are now dried leaves hanging in department store windows.

The hippies are gone, but their warning remains as serious as ever.

Due to space considerations, part two of the Daily's comment on counterculture, which was to appear today, will appear in tomorrow's paper.

McGILL DAILY

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